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ABSTRACT

Under the California Assembly Bill 665 of 1972, the state assessment program must test all students in grades 1, 2, 3, 6, and 12 in reading skills, and those in grades 6 and 12 to assess their skills in effectiveness of written expression, spelling, and mathematics. The state may develop its own tests, and a matrix sampling approach may be used for collecting data. This document contains the content specifications that were developed for the written expression and spelling sections of the Survey of Basic Skills for grades 6 and 12. The content specifications are organized under five general subcontent divisions: Sentences, Paragraphs, Morphology: Words and Word Building, Language Choices, and Spelling. Each of these subcontent divisions is divided into skill areas, with each skill area being divided into subskill components. Illustrative item categories, illustrative performance modes, and examples of test items are provided for each subskill component. (BW)

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CALIFORNIA ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Test Content Specifications for the Survey of Basic Skills

Written Expression and Spelling

GRADES SIX AND TWELVE

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Test Content Specifications
for the Survey of Basic Skills

Written Expression and Spelling Grades Six and Twelve

Prepared under the direction of
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CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION • Wilson Riles—Superintendent of Public Instruction • Sacramento, 1975

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PREFACE

Legislation of 1972, Assembly Bill 665, required changes to be made in the California Assessment Program. It retained the requirement that all pupils in grades six and twelve are to be tested annually in the basic skill areas of reading, basic arithmetic, effectiveness of written expression (formerly "grammar") and spelling. The difference is that each pupil receives only a portion of all items on the total test. This testing approach, known as matrix sampling, reduces the amount of testing time (and associated cost) while it yields more information about the skills of groups of pupils by allowing a wider range of skills and objectives to be assessed. The usefulness of the test data is enhanced for program evaluation and improvement since the items can be selected to match the objectives of a program, and the results of the testing can be reported on an objective-by-objective basis.

In implementing the intent of AB 665 in the area of written expression, the English Language Framework was taken as the basic statement of what was being taught and, therefore, what ought to be tested. The general nature of the document, however, mitigated against its usefulness in selecting test items. An English Language Assessment Advisory Committee was therefore convened and charged with the task of translating the goals found in the Framework into more specific objectives and sample test items to demonstrate the ways in which such objectives ought to be assessed. The names of the persons who gave so generously of their time and talent can be found in Appendix A. The Department of Education and the school districts of California are deeply indebted to this group of dedicated professionals.

The objectives and sample items found in this document represent the specifications which test publishers used in selecting test items for submission to the Department of Education. The items submitted were then reviewed by the Committee and by teams of classroom teachers. The most appropriate items were selected and assembled into short subtests (forms) according to the principles and guidelines found in Appendix B. These new tests were first administered during the 1974-75 school year.

The Committee and the Department recognize that the measurement of "effectiveness of written expression" can best be done by evaluating students' actual writing samples. The requirement of California law that all pupils be tested precludes the use of that method. Most research on the matter does indicate, however, that students who do well on objective tests also write well, and students who do poorly on objective tests have difficulty in actual writing situations. This suggests that, although they are indirect measures, objective tests do provide an indication of student writing skills.

Therefore, while we await the development of more economical methods of large-scale essay scoring, some degree of confidence in the objective measures of written expression appears to be warranted. While recognizing this, the members of the English Language Assessment Advisory Committee felt that a statement of the concerns of their profession regarding testing should be made more explicit. This statement is found in Appendix C.

For the initial test, items were selected which appeared to be logically related to writing skill. In future years, the test will be refined to include only those items which are found to be related to actual writing skill. Unfortunately, the assessment of writing-related skills by objective methods has been a generally neglected area of research.

The specifications and sample items in this document are those that have been agreed upon as representing the commonalities among the English curricula. They were the basis for the development of the initial pool of test items and will be used in the selection of items for the revision of the test.

In providing these specifications, the Department urges their use with caution and only for the purpose of assisting school personnel in interpreting the scores of the content and subcontent areas of the Survey of Basic Skills. A score can be judged good or bad only if the judgment is based upon the nature of the items used in the measuring instrument and the skills that are stressed in a particular school's program.

DONALD R. McKINLEY
Chief Deputy Superintendent
of Public Instruction

For example, if a school's program does not call for teaching skills in a particular area, a low score does not necessarily mean that the total program is ineffective.

These specifications represent the "blue-print" of the statewide assessment instrument. Their use as a guide to an instructional program would be improper. Instructional objectives are usually exhaustive, whereas the specifications for the test content are, at best, a sample of the objectives in a comprehensive instructional program. It is recommended that the direction for improving a district's English curriculum should be derived from such sources as the English Language Framework for California Public Schools.

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INTRODUCTION

The intent of Assembly Bill 665 (Ch. 930, Education Code), which allowed the Department of Education to develop its own tests, was to insure that the tests used in the state assessment program would be comprehensive enough to represent the curriculum content of most California schools. It was necessary to develop a framework of the test content which could be used in the construction of a valid test of student performance in certain areas.

This document contains the content specifications that were developed for the written expression and spelling sections of the Survey of Basic Skills for grades six and twelve. In both organization and content, the specifications were designed to correlate with learning patterns in language acquisition and with sequential curricular patterns used in many language arts programs.

The content specifications are organized under five general subcontent divisions: "Sentences," "Paragraphs," "Morphology: Words and Word Building," "Language Choices," and "Spelling." Each of these subcontent divisions is divided into skill areas, with each skill area being divided into subskill components. Illustrative item categories, illustrative performance modes, and examples of test items are provided for each subskill component.

Some recently developed teaching materials are based upon the recognition of the child's command of language patterns, particularly English sentence patterns. Instructional units in these materials move either from or toward basic sentence units. Linguistic research in the last two decades provides reliable evidence that the sentence--a group of words organized to convey a specific message--is the basic unit of communication. Even children at preschool level show amazing facility in forming and responding to full sentences. Communication units of less than sentence length, used frequently in the spoken language and often in written language, are based on the assumptions that, in English, these fragmented utterances are related to a whole sentence implied in the context in which the utterances occur.

Subcontent area 1.0, "Sentences," deals with the recognition of sentences, manipulation of sentence parts, and systems and conventions of punctuation and capitalization.

Subcontent area 2.0, "Paragraphs," deals with several aspects of paragraph development. The recognition of paragraph development, main ideas, summary statements, and transitional elements are covered in this subcontent area.

Subcontent area 3.0, "Morphology: Words and Word Building," treats word forms, the use of the apostrophe, and dictionary usage skills.

Subcontent area 4.0, "Language Choices," deals with the appropriateness of words and phrases, attitude conveying words, context connotation, tone, abstractions, and the correct use of person.

The content area of "Spelling," 5.0, treats the rule applications of spelling relationships with vowel sounds, consonant sounds, and spelling patterns in word forming.

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA 1.0: SENTENCES

Skill Area 1.1: Recognition of Sentences and Sentence Parts

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
1.11	Recognize that word order shows meaning in English and that word meaning depends on word order.	Sentences having normal English word order as opposed to sentences with confused and un-English word order.	6 & 12	Given four sentences, three of which follow English word order, select the one that is least likely to occur in an English sentence.	Read these four groups of words: a. Our best football player broke his arm during the game yesterday. b. Our best football player his arm yesterday during the game broke. c. Yesterday during the game our best football player broke his arm. d. Yesterday our best football player broke his arm during the game. Circle the letter of the group which is not a grammatical English sentence. a. b. c. d.
		Sentences having normal English word order where a change in word order makes a difference in meaning.	6 & 12	Given four sentences, all of which follow normal English word order, select the one that is different in meaning.	In which of these four sentences is the person discussing a nonwork day? a. My off day is generally Monday. b. Generally, my off day is Monday. c. Monday is generally my off day. d. Monday is generally my day off.
		Sentences having varying orders whose meaning changes with the order.	6 & 12	Given a sentence with a phrase underlined, select the grammatical referent of the phrase.	That's the puppy he wanted to sell the boy <u>with the wet nose</u>. In the above sentence, <u>with the wet nose</u> grammatically must refer to: a. the boy b. the puppy c. he
				Given two sentences with the same word used in different contexts, select the meaning of the word in each context.	How much is the fare on this bus? How did he fare in the contest? In the first sentence, <u>fare</u> means: a. money b. result c. do

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA 1.0: SENTENCES

Skill Area 1.1: Recognition of Sentences and Sentence Parts

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
1.12	Recognize the subject-predicate relationship.	Sentences having or lacking predicating verbs.	6 & 12	Given four sentences, select the one which has/lacks a predicating verb.	Identify the group of words which is incomplete or needs additional words to complete the meaning: a. Mack and Sonny skipped school. b. The rising clouds of dust. c. The day was hot and clear. d. Twelve o'clock is lunchtime.
				Given an incomplete sentence with alternative endings, select the ending which can/cannot complete the sentence due to presence/absence of predicating verb.	Identify the group of words which cannot complete the sentence which begins: The boys_____ _____ a. are cutting school. b. are having a good time. c. attend Emerson Junior High. d. to see what is happening.
		Sentences identifying the verb form which signals agreement with the subject.	12	Given a sentence with a choice of verb forms, select the one that agrees with the subject.	The body design of American automobiles _____ almost every year. a. change b. have change c. changes d. have changes
1.13	Identify four basic sentence patterns in English: Noun - Verb Noun - (T) Verb - Noun Noun - (L) Verb - Noun Noun - (L) Verb - Modifier	Sentences which follow four basic patterns.	6 & 12	Given a model sentence, select a sentence having the same basic pattern.	Select from the sentences below the one which follows the pattern of the model: The flight began. a. The boys were angry. b. Many boys were strangers. c. Steve fought John. d. We ran.
		Sentences which follow four basic patterns but are complicated by modification (adjective, adverb of time or place).	12		a. After all the noise and interference had subsided, the chairman spoke in an atmosphere still charged with tension. b. A fire engine with its siren wailing should not be followed by curious motorists. c. An irritating annoyance on any vacation in the mountains is likely to be mosquitoes.

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA 1.0: SENTENCES

Skill Area 1.1: Recognition of Sentences and Sentence Parts

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
1.14	Demonstrate a knowledge of the predictability of language.	Sentences requiring the insertion of appropriate form class words.	6 & 12	Given a sentence with omitted form class words, select the the appropriate noun, verb, adjective, or adverb for insertion.	That girl may become ___(noun)___. a. president b. immediately c. in the movies In which place in the sentence below will only not go? The bear bit the man in the crowd. a. Only the bear b. Only bit c. The only man d. The only crowd
1.15	Demonstrate a knowledge of the inflection as part of the grammar of English.	Sentences requiring the insertion of the appropriately inflected word form which would indicate a change in: a. time. b. meaning. c. function.	6 & 12	Distinguish verb forms from noun forms and identify the meaning of both inflected forms.	In the following sentence, select the form of the word which fits in the blank. The boy was _____ embarrassment for the first time. a. experience b. experienced c. experiences d. experiencing _____ teaches students. a. Experience b. Experienced c. Experiences d. Experiencing

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA 1.0: SENTENCES

Skill Area 1.2: Manipulation of Sentences and Sentence Parts

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
1.21	Manipulate sentences and sentence parts to: a. use transformations. b. invert sentence parts.	Sentences which show transformations.	6 & 12	Given a statement and four questions, select the question which does not interrogate a structure in the statement.	The salesman gave the housewife the promised hairbrush grudgingly. Which of the following questions does not question a structure in the above sentence? a. Who gave the housewife the hairbrush? b. What did the salesman give the housewife? c. To whom did the salesman give the hairbrush? d. From where did the salesman come?
	c. modify sentence structure.	Sentences which show modification through single words, phrases, and clauses.	6 & 12	Select the proper word, phrase, or clause to modify the meaning of a sentence.	Which word cannot be inserted in the blank: The _____ dress looked lovely on the model. a. blue b. blowing c. cleverly d. plain
	d. change voice.	Sentences which show changes from active to passive and from passive to active voice.	6 & 12	Select the proper word or phrase that will change a sentence from active to passive or from passive to active.	Select the proper phrase which will change the sentence from active to passive. The boy hit the ball. a. was hit by b. decided to hit c. wished to hit d. was hitting
1.22	Manipulate sentence parts to change the intent or effect of the sentence.	Sentences showing change of intent or effect in: a. yes/no questions.	12	Select from a list of questions the one that is designed for a particular intent or effect.	Of the four questions listed below, which one calls for a "yes" answer? **a. Why did you borrow the money?** **b. When did you borrow the money?** **c. You borrowed the money, didn't you?** **d. You didn't borrow the money, did you?** Of the four questions listed above, which is a leading one calling for a "yes" answer? a. b. c. d.

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA 1.0: SENTENCES

Skill Area 1.2: Manipulation of Sentences and Sentence Parts

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
1.22 (contd)		b. the use of active and passive voice.	12	Given a specified intent for emphasizing one or more elements in a sentence through the use of active and passive voice, select from a list the sentence that most nearly reflects that intent.	Which of the following sentences is most economical and best serves the purpose of emphasizing the historic building and its loss? a. The wrecking crew of the Acme Construction Company demolished the century-old mansion in just one hour. b. The Acme Construction Company demolished the century-old mansion in just one hour. c. The century-old mansion was demolished by a wrecking crew in just one hour. d. The century-old mansion was demolished in just one hour.
1.23	Identify various ways two or more sentences may be combined to show specific relationships.	Two or more sentences with alternatives which indicate the: **a. coordination of sentences giving equal emphasis to each.**	6 & 12	Given two or more sentences, select from among possible orderings the one which indicates the coordination of ideas.	The two following sentences can be combined in a number of ways. Eric lost a wallet. We found a wallet. Which of the following sentences gives the original two sentences equal emphasis? a. We found Eric's lost wallet. b. Eric lost a wallet and we found it. c. We found a wallet that Eric lost. d. Eric lost the wallet we found.
		b. subordination of ideas so that one of the sentences is reduced to a modifier.		Given two or more sentences, select from among possible orderings the one which, through a choice of subordinating words or group of words, reduces one to a modifier.	The two following sentences may be expressed in a number of ways. 1. The team made Jim captain. 2. Afterwards, Jim stopped trying to improve his grades. Which of the following sentences best emphasizes the idea of sentence 2 while reducing the importance of the idea in sentence 1? a. Jim stopped trying to improve his grades after the team had made him captain. b. The team made Jim captain, and Jim stopped trying to improve his grades. c. Jim became the team's captain by the members' choice, and his grades dropped by his choice. **d. Upon becoming captain, Jim's grades dropped.**

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA 1.0: SENTENCES

Skill Area 1.3: Punctuation and Capitalization

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
1.31	Demonstrate an understanding of the purposes and conventions for using punctuation and capitalization.	**A. Punctuation as a system** **1. Sentences using commas for:** **a. joining sentences or parts of sentences** **b. surrounding parts of sentences** **2. Sentences using semicolons for:** **a. joining sentences** **b. coordinating parts of sentences** **3. Sentences using and punctuation for showing:** **a. statements** **b. questions** **c. exclamations** **4. Sentences using the colon to announce:** **a. a list** **b. a series of appointives at one end of a sentence** **5. Paragraph wherein punctuation may include alternatives such as a semicolon or a period, depending upon the intent.** **6. Sentences into which a number of nonrestrictive modifiers may be inserted.** **7. Sentences whose punctuation changes the meaning of the sentence.**	6 & 12	Given four sentences, select the sentence having one or more punctuation (system) mistakes.	Indicate which of the following sentences has a punctuation mistake. a. John, walking slowly, approached the principal, Mr. Smith. b. The man wanted a hammer, nails, wood, and paint. c. "Where," John asked "Are you going." d. The boy wanted three items: paper, a pencil, and a book.
			6 & 12	From among four sentences, select the one that does/does not contain one or more punctuation (system) mistakes.	Which of the following sentences tells you that the name of the speaker is Bob? a. Please call me, Bob. b. Please call me Bob. c. Please, Bob, call me. d. Bob, please call me.
			6 & 12	From a paragraph, select the line that contains a punctuation (system) mistake.	
			6 & 12	Given a sentence or series of sentences from which punctuation has been omitted, select the proper punctuation (system) for insertion.	In the following sentence, which punctuation is needed? The new building Martin is nearby. a. The new building Martin is nearby? b. The new building, Martin, is nearby. c. The new, building Martin is nearby. d. The new, building, Martin is nearby.

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA 1.0: SENTENCES

Skill Area 1.3: Punctuation and Capitalization

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
1.31 (contd)		B. Punctuation as a convention: 1. Sentences using commas in: a. dates b. addresses c. setting off introductory words d. complimentary close in a letter	6 & 12	**Given a sentence or sentences which are placed on four lines, select the one or more punctuation (convention) mistake.**	Indicate the sentence in which a punctuation mistake has been made. a. Andrew is going to Chicago, Illinois, on May 1, 1975. b. Sally said "She is going home." c. Slowly, Betty approached the house at 1815 Bay Street. d. Sally's shoes were made in San Diego, California.
		2. Formal business letter using a colon			
		3. Sentences using introductory comma and quotation marks to indicate: a. direct quotation b. a question within a quotation	6 & 12	From among four sentences, select the one that does/ does not contain one or more punctuation (convention) mistakes.	Which of the following is the correct salutation in a formal business letter? a. Dear Mr. Smith, b. Dear Mr. Smith: c. Dear Mr. Smith. d. Dear Mr. Smith:
		4. Sentences containing words used as: a. singular possessive b. plural possessive c. contractions		From a paragraph, select the line that contains a punctuation (convention) mistake. Given a sentence or series of sentences from which punctuation has been omitted, select the proper punctuation (convention) for insertion.	
		C. Capitalization 1. Sentence(s) which illustrate omission in the capitalization of: a. first word in a sentence b. direct formal quotation c. proper nouns and derivatives d. names of: (1) people, races, tribes, languages (2) treaties, laws, events, wars (3) geographical locations (4) geographical areas	6 & 12	Given a sentence or sentences, select the sentence having one or more capitalization mistakes. **From among four sentences, select the one that does/** does not contain one or more capitalization mistakes. From a paragraph, select the line that contains a capitalization mistake. Given a sentence or series of sentences from which capitalization has been omitted, select the proper capitalization for insertion.	Indicate which of the following sentences has a capitalization error: a. The attack came during the night of April 21, 1974. b. The citizens of New Haven decided to confront the mayor of reading, Pennsylvania. c. The Early Entry Institute is designed to meet the needs of high risk students. d. None of the above has an error.

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA 2.0: PARAGRAPHS

Skill Area 2.1: Paragraph Development

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
2.11	Recognize a paragraph as a sequence of structurally and conceptually related sentences.	A series of four sentences, one of which is unrelated conceptually to the other three.	6 & 12	Given a paragraph consisting of four or more sentences, select the one which is not structurally related to the others.	Identify the sentence which is unrelated to the others. a. In the coming decades, food scarcity may become the normal condition of life on earth -- not only in the poor countries but in the richer ones as well. b. Unless present trends are somehow reversed, say biologists, in the 1980's millions of people in the poor countries may die of starvation. c. The affluent nations, including the United States, may experience dramatically reduced standards of living at home. d. Feeding tuna fish to cats and dogs is morally wrong because people could eat this food.
2.12	Identify some of the commonly used patterns of idea and information development (e.g., time, space, cause and effect, comparison, or contrast).	A paragraph in which the verbs refer to the past, with the exception of one sentence.	6 & 12	Given a paragraph, identify the sentence which does not maintain the consistency of time, space, cause and effect, or comparison or contrast.	Select the sentence that is inconsistent with the time development. a. That day we had eaten only broth, our last solid food having been used up a week earlier. b. The snow was lightly crusted and bright with reflected sunlight. c. Our prospects for securing any food -- any ptarmigan -- were poor. d. My Eskimo companion and I lagged now, weak from hunger.
2.13	Identify a sentence which expresses the main idea of a paragraph.	A paragraph composed mostly of detailed information.	6 & 12	Given a paragraph and four general statements, select the one which most accurately summarizes the paragraph.	
2.14	Identify the relationship between specific details in a paragraph and a general statement about these details.	Sentences describing a visual stimulus, some giving the central conception, others giving details.	6 & 12	Given a visual stimulus, select from among four sentences the one which states the central conception of the stimulus.	

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA 2.0: PARAGRAPHS

Skill Area 2.1: Paragraph Development

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
2.14 (contd.)		A paragraph with sentences not in a logical sequence.	6 & 12	Given a paragraph consisting of four or more sentences which may be out of logical sequence, select the proper re-ordering sequence.	The following paragraph may not be in logical sequence. Read the paragraph and select the sequence order you feel is correct. (1) We wake in the same small room from the deep sleep of good children to the soft sound of wind through the casuarina trees and the gentle sleep-breathing rhythm of waves on the shore. (2) We run bare-legged to the beach, which lies smooth, flat, and glistening with fresh wet shells after the night's tides. (3) The morning swim has the nature of a blessing to me, a baptism, a rebirth to the beauty and wonder of the world. (4) We run back tingling to hot coffee on our small back porch. a. Correct as is. b. 3, 1, 4, 2. c. 2, 4, 1, 3. d. 3, 4, 2, 1.
2.15	Select from several options the sentence which best summarizes the ideas presented in two related paragraphs.	Two or more related paragraphs with a choice of summary statements.	12	Given two related paragraphs and four summary statements, select the sentence which most effectively summarizes the two paragraphs.	The airplane has unveiled for us the true face of the earth. It has forced us to look at lands we have previously had no knowledge of. It has forced us to look at all parts of a country, to see the parts of a country that the tourists, politicians, and the prosperous businessman may have bypassed. We were like that queen who determined to move among her subjects so that she might learn for herself whether or not they rejoiced in her reign. Her courtiers took advantage of her innocence to garland the road she traveled and set dancers in her path. She saw nothing of her kingdom and could not know that over the countryside the famished were cursing her.
2.16	Identify transitional elements, both key words and connectors, which show relationships within a paragraph.	A paragraph containing transitional elements such as words like then, now, usually, tomorrow, all of these, therefore, when, or finally.	12	Given a paragraph with transitional elements related to time, place, and condition, select from a list of terms taken from the paragraph the one which does/does not show relationships within the paragraph.	Even so have we been making our way along the winding roads. Roads avoid the barren lands, the rocks, the sands. They shape themselves to man's needs and run from stream to stream. But they do not tell man of his more distant neighbor who lacks roads. Only the airplane can achieve this feat.

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA 2.0: PARAGRAPHS

Skill Area 2.1: Paragraph Development

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
2.17	Identify transitional sentences which connect and show relationships between two or more paragraphs.	Two short paragraphs connected by transitional sentences, clauses, phrases, or words.	12	Given two short paragraphs and a list of four sentences, clauses, phrases, or words, select the one which does/does not represent a transitional connection.	**Which of the following statements best summarizes the preceding two paragraphs?** a. The earth is an interesting place. b. The airplane has unveiled for us the true face of the earth. c. No one can travel everywhere. d. Our planet is indeed beautiful. Which of the following phrases is used to indicate a connection between the paragraphs? a. Could not know b. Even so c. They lead d. They shape

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA 3.0: MORPHOLOGY: WORDS AND WORD BUILDING

Skill Area 3.1: Word Forms

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
3.11	Identify the relationships among the base word, affixes, and the functions of the combined form in a sentence.	Sentences with one or more base words with affixes omitted.	6 & 12	Given a sentence in which a base word and its affixes have been omitted, select the proper combined form for inclusion.	Select from the base word survive the form or related words which will fit into the following sentence. The dogs had _____ the long trek. a. survival b. survivors c. surviving d. survived
3.12	Distinguish between form class words and structure words.	A sentence and a list of verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and structure words like but, so, and though.	6 & 12	Given a sentence and a list of words which have independent meaning and words which show relationships, select the one which does not belong with the others.	Read the following sentence carefully. To everyone's delight the children from the hospital could see the toys on the tree from anywhere in the room. Which word does not belong in the following list because it does an entirely different job in the sentence from the job done by the other three words. a. on b. from c. to d. see
3.13	Select the proper form class word for a given syntactical structure.	Sentences with form class words omitted.	6 & 12	Given a sentence with a form class word omitted, select from a list of form class words the correct word for insertion.	Select the proper form class word for the following sentences. 1. We should _____ them. 2. This _____ seemed reassuring. a. powerful b. power c. powerfully d. overpower

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA 3.0: MORPHOLOGY: WORDS AND WORD BUILDING

Skill Area 3.2: Apostrophe

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
3.21	**Recognize that the apostrophe mark is used to show missing letters in two contracted words.**	Set of words using the apostrophe mark to show missing letters in contracted words.	6 & 12	Given a set of four contracted words using apostrophe marks, select: a. the word in which the apostrophe mark is misplaced. b. the complete words that would match the contraction.	In which of the following words is the apostrophe misplaced? a. doesn't b. aren't c. I've d. Id' The complete words for the contraction aren't are: a. am not b. are not c. are too d. am too
3.22	**Recognize that the apostrophe indicates possession: 's for singular noun; 's for plural nouns not ending in s; s' for plural nouns ending in s.**	Set of words using the apostrophe to indicate singular possessive or plural possessive.	6 & 12	Given a set of four phrases using possessive nouns, select: a. the word in which the apostrophe is misplaced in the singular noun. b. the word in which the apostrophe is misplaced in the plural noun.	In which of the following phrases is the apostrophe misplaced? a. a cow's tail b. a mailman's whistle c. a ladys' name d. the girl's address **In which of the following phrases is the apostrophe misplaced?** a. the men's bags b. the drivers' licenses c. the waitresse's uniform d. children's books

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA: 3.0: MORPHOLOGY: WORDS AND WORD BUILDING

Skill Area 3.3: Word History and Meaning: Dictionary Usage for a Variety of Purposes

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
3.31	Use alphabetical sequencing.	Guide words for a single dictionary page and appropriate word list.	6 & 12	Given guide words for a single dictionary page, select from a list of four the word that would be alphabetically sequenced between the guide words.	Identify from the list below those words which would be on page 218 of the dictionary between the guide words deject and delta. **deject 218 delta** a. deft b. delicious c. deliver d. demand
3.32	Identify word origins.	A dictionary passage for a single word with questions relating to: a. the origin of the word.	6 & 12	Given a dictionary passage for a single word, select from a list of four alternatives: a. the language of origin of the word. b. the root origin of the word.	Read the following dictionary entry and answer the questions below. de.liv.er \di-'liv-ər\ vt de.liv.er.ing \-'liv-(ə)riŋ\ [ME deliveren, fr. OF delivrer, fr. LL deliberare, fr. L de- + liberare to liberate] 1: to set free 2: to hand over: CONVEY 3: to assist in giving birth; also: to aid in the birth of 4: UTTER, RELATE 5: to send to an intended destination 6: to bring (as votes) to the support of a candidate or cause syn see RESCUE -- de.liv.er.able \-'liv-(ə) rə-bəl\ adj.--de.liv.er.er \-'liv-ər-ər\ n.
3.33	Identify different meanings for one word and select the correct meaning for a given context.	b. that word used in one or more different sentence contexts.	6 & 12	c. the proper word meaning for a particular context.	The origin of the word deliver is from: a. Old English b. Old High German c. Latin **d. Greek** Identify the number of the dictionary meaning which is appropriate in the sentence: Deliver the package to my home. a. 1 b. 2 c. 3 d. 5

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA 3.0: MORPHOLOGY: WORDS AND WORD BUILDING

Skill Area 3.3: Word History and Meaning: Dictionary Usage for a Variety of Purposes

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
3.34	Make accurate choices using the pronunciation key.	c. the use of the pronunciation key in determining how the word is to be pronounced.	6 & 12	d. similar or like phonics in other words.	Read the sentence: He was the deliverer of good news. The pronunciation of the word deliverer is which of the following? a. de as in debate liv as in living er as in river er as in setter b. del as in delta ive as in jive er as in river er as in sitter
3.35	Locate synonyms.	d. a choice of synonyms to the passage word.	6 & 12	e. a synonym for one of the meanings of the essay passage.	Read the following sentence carefully: The ambassador will deliver the message to the President tomorrow. Which of the following is a synonym for the word deliver? a. utter b. delete c. convey d. trap
3.36	Separate words into parts.	e. the number of syllables in the passage word.	6 & 12	f. the number of syllables in the passage word.	Identify the number of syllables in deliver. a. one b. two c. three d. four
3.37	Select the appropriate word form for a given context.	f. the choice of a word form for a specific sentence context.	6 & 12	g. the appropriate word form for a specific sentence context.	Using the dictionary entry, select the proper word. The _____ was a man in a blue suit. a. delivering b. deliverance c. deliverer

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA 4.0: LANGUAGE CHOICES

Skill Area 4.1: Appropriateness of Words and Phrases

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
4.11	Identify the audience of a prose passage.	Prose passage(s) written for a particular audience.	6 & 12	Given a prose passage with four audience choices, select the group for which the passage was/was not written.	"Are you mad at me, ma'am?" I returned the books and the librarian smiled at me. "Forty-six cents," she whispered. "I hope they were worth it." The above passage was taken from a story written for: a. scientists b. teachers c. young people d. politicians

Skill Area 4.2: Identification of Attitude-Conveying Words and Phrases

4.21	Identify words or phrases that reveal a writer's attitude toward his subject.	A paragraph with words or phrases connoting positive or negative attitudes. A set of words connoting positive, neutral, or negative attitudes.	6 & 12	Given a paragraph or set of words, select from four alternatives the one which: a. describes the attitude of the writer. b. indicates the attitude of the writer.	In the previous case he inflicted a trauma on the party in the North in order to court the favor of a group of staunch conservatives. In the above passage, the attitude of the writer is: a. positive b. neutral c. negative d. unknown
4.22	Identify words or phrases that reveal a speaker's attitude.	Excerpts from a speech having words or phrases connoting neutral, friendly, or unfriendly attitudes.	6 & 12	Given an excerpt from a speech select from four alternatives the one which: a. describes the attitude of the speaker. b. indicates the attitude of the speaker.	Which of the following sentences expresses the most unfriendly attitude? Speaker 1: Those boys might get hurt climbing the fence. Speaker 2: Don't worry about them. Boys will be boys, and they have to climb fences. Speaker 3: I'd tell those kids to get out or I'd call the cops. Speaker 4: Kids can be pretty dumb.

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA 4.0: LANGUAGE CHOICES

Skill Area 4.2: Identification of Attitude-Conveying Words and Phrases

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
4.22 (contd)		A list of words or phrases that may be used to denote a friendly, neutral, or unfriendly attitude.	6 & 12	Given a set of four words or phrases, select the one which indicates a friendly, neutral or unfriendly attitude.	From the following groups of words, select the one which suggests an unfavorable attitude of a speaker. a. policeman b. inquisitive c. teen-ager d. fuzz
	Skill Area 4.3: Context Connotation				
4.31	Identify the connotations of synonyms in different contexts.	A sentence with a set of synonyms for a key word, each of which would have a different connotation in that particular context.	6 & 12	Given a sentence with a set of synonyms for a key word, select from a set of four synonyms the one which will achieve a specified context connotation.	These words are synonyms: a. fat b. plump c. obese d. overweight Indicate for each sentence below the word that is most appropriate for the blank in that sentence. a. She had a well-rounded, _____ look. b. Jack weighed more than he should; the doctor told him he was _____. c. The boy eating the hotdog was so _____ that his cheeks bulged out like a squirrel's. d. The ad states that pants with a 46" or a 48" waist are intended for the man who is _____.
4.32	Select from among homophones and related forms of a word the correct form for a given sentence context.	A set of sentences having a choice of homophones for insertion into context.	6 & 12	Given a sentence with a word omitted, select from among a list of homophones and related words the correct word for a given sentence context.	Indicate the letter of the word which completes the following sentences. a. The class was asked not to _____at their tests. b. The _____ for the boat cost $50 on _____. (1) peak (2) peek (3) sail/sale (4) sale/sail

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA 4.0: LANGUAGE CHOICES

Skill Area 4.4: Tone Identification

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
4.41	Identify the tone and purpose of selected paragraphs and letters.	Paragraphs and letters using appropriate diction and appropriate distance from the speaker/writer.	6 & 12	Given a paragraph or letter with diction appropriate for a particular audience and having a particular intent, select from four alternatives the audience for whom the material is/is not intended and the purpose of the material.	Examine the following letter and answer from a daily advice column: Dear Heart: My mother and I stopped at a gasoline station. She asked for $2 worth of gas but the attendant put in $3. My mother said that all she had was $2, but she lived only a few blocks away (which was true) so she would go home and get another dollar. She didn't have any more money at home then, but she has now, although she has never gone back to pay him. What should she have done? Wondering Dear Wondering: She should have told the man she would bring the dollar to him as soon as she had it. Then she should have kept her word. The audience for whom this letter is intended: a. Adults who are curious about peoples' everyday problems. b. Educated adults who read the column for answers. c. Well-educated senior citizens. d. Teachers seeking to guide students.

Skill Area 4.5: Levels of Abstraction

4.51	Identify words and phrases at varying levels of abstraction.	Sets of words or phrases ranging from concrete to abstract.	6 & 12	Given a set of four words or phrases ranging from concrete to abstract, select the most concrete/abstract among them.	Which of the following words is most general? a. Oak b. conifer c. tree d. Redwood
4.52	Differentiate between general and specific descriptions.	Sets of statements ranging from specific to general.	6 & 12	Given a set of four descriptive statements, select the most specific/general among them.	Identify the most specific statement below: a. The skiploader is working. b. The skiploader, number 321, is scooping up old bricks. c. The skiploader can scoop up almost everything. d. The skiploader is a work-saving invention in the construction industry.

CONTENT AREA: WRITTEN EXPRESSION

SUBCONTENT AREA 4.0: LANGUAGE CHOICES

Skill Area 4.6: Use of First, Second, and Third Person

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
4.61	Maintain a consistent use of first, second, or third person.	A paragraph or sentence(s) with words omitted in first, second, and/or third person.	6 & 12	Given a paragraph or sentence with omitted first, second, or third person words, select from among four choices the person, word, or words maintaining consistency.	Select the appropriate choice group for insertion in the following sentence. Never, in all of _____ travels, did _____ bring anything to _____. a. my, me, him b. his, he, I c. their, they, us d. her, she, we

CONTENT AREA: SPELLING

Skill Area 5.1: Spelling Relationships in Vowel Sounds

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
5.11	Apply spelling rules for /ā/.	Set of words embodying spelling units for: a. The vowel /ā/ used medially (1) /ā/ sound, the spelling of which is ai or ei. (2) /ā/ sound: vowel-consonant - e.	6 & 12	Given a set of four words representing the spelling rules for: a. /ā/, select the one that is spelled incorrectly.	Which of the following words is spelled incorrectly? a. bail b. mail c. fait d. wait a. base b. rave c. save d. wate
		b. The vowel /ā/ used finally (1) /ā/ sound at the end of words which do/do not follow the usual spelling pattern ay.	6 & 12		a. day b. stay c. tray d. thay
5.12	Apply spelling rules for /ū/.	a. The vowel /ū/ (1) /ū/ ending sound spelled as ew or as ue.	6 & 12	b. /ū/, select the one that is spelled incorrectly.	a. flew b. stew c. crew d. perseu
		b. The vowel /ů/ (1) /ů/ sound spelled as u or as o.	6 & 12	c. /ů/, select the one that is spelled incorrectly.	a. come b. money c. done d. som
5.13	Apply spelling rules for /o/.	a. The vowel /ó/ (1) /ó/ sound spelled as au always before gh with two exceptions. (2) /ó/ sound spelled as ou.	6 & 12	d. /ó/, select the on that is spelled incorrectly.	a. caught b. fought c. saught d. ought
		b. The vowel /ō/ (1) /ō/ sound, the spelling of which is ow. (2) /ō/sound, the spelling of which is eau.	6 & 12	e. /ō/, select the one that is spelled incorrectly.	a. beau b. bow c. sleau d. slow

CONTENT AREA: SPELLING

Skill Area 5.1: **Spelling Relationships in Vowel Sounds**

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
5.14	Apply spelling rules for /oi/.	Set of words embodying spelling units for: a. /oi/ sound (1) spelled as oi if medial. (2) spelled as oy if the sound is final.	6 & 12	Given a set of four words representing the spelling rules for: a. /oi/, select the one that is spelled incorrectly.	Which of the following words is spelled incorrectly? a. joint b. annoy c. broil d. destroi
5.15	Distinguish among the various ways of spelling the /ē/ sound.	a. /ē/ sound	6 & 12	b. /ē/, select the one that is spelled incorrectly.	a. heat b. sneek c. thief d. weak

Skill Area 5.2: Spelling Relationships in Consonant Sounds

5.21	Recognize that the j sound of a word is usually spelled dg.	Set of words embodying spelling units representing: a. the j sound being spelled dg.	6 & 12	Given a set of four words, select the one that represents: a. an incorrect exception to the j sound being spelled dg.	Which of the following words is spelled incorrectly? a. judge b. wedge c. hedj d. change
5.22	Recognize that the s sound at the end of a word may be spelled ce or se.	b. the s sound at the end of a word being spelled ce and se.	6 & 12	b. the s sound at the end of a word being incorrectly spelled ce instead of se and vice versa.	a. face b. lace c. chace d. place
5.23	Recognize that the f sound in a word is spelled: a. ph after an s.	c. the f sound in a word being spelled ph after an s.	6 & 12	c. an f sound that follows an s but which is not spelled ph.	a. frog b. flat c. sfere d. craft
	b. gh or ff after a short vowel.	d. the f sound in a word being spelled gh and ff after a short vowel.	6 & 12	d. the f sound that follows a short vowel being incorrectly spelled gh instead of ff and vice versa.	a. laugh b. gruff c. enouf d. stuff
5.24	Recognize that the g sound in a word may be spelled gu.	e. the g sound being spelled gu.	6 & 12	e. the g sound in a word being incorrectly spelled.	a. guess b. guard c. disguise d. gitar

Skill Area 5.2: Spelling Relationships in Consonant Sounds

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
5.25	Recognize that the k sound in a word is spelled ck in most single syllable words and c in two and three syllable words when stress is not on the last syllable.	f. the k sound being incorrectly spelled in a single syllable word following a short vowel.	6 & 12	d. the k sound being incorrectly spelled c in a single syllable word. e. the k sound being incorrectly spelled ck in a two or three syllable word.	a. duk b. truck c. luck d. lock a. electric b. frantick c. antic d. panic

Skill Area 5.3: Spelling Patterns in Word Forming

5.31	Recognize that an adverb is correctly spelled if an ly is added to the base word unless the base word is two syllables and ends in y preceded by a consonant.	Set of words embodying spelling units representing: a. adverbs formed by adding ly to a base word. b. adverbs formed from two syllable words when the ending y preceded by a consonant is changed to i.	6 & 12	Given a set of four words, select the one that represents: a. incorrectly adding i instead of ly to a base word and vice versa.	Which of the following words is spelled incorrectly? a. dryly b. shyly c. easyly d. slyly
5.32	Recognize that adding suffixes like ed or ing to words ending in a single consonant letter preceded by a short vowel sound requires the doubling of a final consonant.	c. doubling of a final consonant letter plus the suffixes ed or ing to words ending in a single consonant letter preceded by a short vowel sound for single syllable words or for two syllable words when stress is on the second syllable.	6 & 12	b. the omission of the consonant to be doubled before the suffixes ed or ing.	a. stepping b. beginning c. steped d. hopped
5.33	Recognize that verbs ending in e require the dropping of that letter when adding the ing suffix.	d. the adding of the ing suffix to verbs ending in e.	6 & 12	c. failure to drop the e prior to the adding of the ing suffix.	a. writeing b. liking c. bathing d. tracing

CONTENT AREA: SPELLING

Skill Area 5.3: Spelling Patterns in Word Forming

Level	Subskill Area	Illustrative Item Category	Grade Level	Illustrative Performance Mode	Example
5.34	Recognize that in simple compounds, all letters of both words are usually retained.	e. simple compounds of words.	6 & 12	d. failure to retain all of the letters of both words, when proper, in forming a simple compound and vice versa.	a. anywhere b. disppeared c. helpful d. hopeful
5.35	Recognize that the ble suffix is preceded by a except on bases with Latin mit, and preceded by i on an English noun form ending in ion.	f. the addition of the ble suffix to base words, base words with Latin mit, and to English noun forms ending in ation and ion.	12	e. the ble suffix preceded by a on an English noun form ending in ion.	a. digestible b. permissible c. submissible d. negligable
				f. the ble suffix incorrectly preceded by i.	a. possible b. adjustable c. regretable d. acceptible
5.36	Recognize that when adding the suffix ity to base words ending in e, that letter is omitted.	g. the addition of the ity suffix to base words ending in the letter e.	[illegible]	[illegible] failure to omit the final letter e when adding the ity suffix to the base.	a. ability b. activity c. sincerery d. university
5.37	Recognize that when adding the noun-forming suffix ion to words ending in mit, that the final t is replaced by ss.	h. the addition of the ion suffix to words ending in mit.	6 & 12	h. failure to replace the final t with ss.	a. submission b. admission c. omition d. permission
5.38	Recognize the conventions for adding the plural marker.	i. changing a word from singular to plural by: (1)adding an s. (2)adding es to nouns ending in s, z, ch, or sh. (3)changing final y to i and adding es for nouns ending in y preceded by a consonant.	6 & 12	i. the adding of es instead of s to nouns ending in z, ch, or sh, and vice versa.	a. wishes b. churchs c. fezes d. watches
				j. the failure to change y to i before adding es for nouns preceded by a consonant.	a. daisies b. beauties c. babys d. charities

Appendix A

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT
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Appendix B

PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES FOR DESIGNING TESTS TO BE USED TO ASSESS COMPETENCIES IN WRITTEN EXPRESSION AND SPELLING IN GRADES SIX AND TWELVE

Principles

Any California program of statewide assessment of public school pupils' competencies related to their command of English language should be founded upon certain principles presented in two documents:

1. The English Language Framework for California Public Schools (adopted in 1968; readopted in 1971).
2. The "Criteria for Evaluating Instructional Materials for English and Related Studies, K-8" prepared by the English Advisory Group of the California State Commission, published in the CATE Bulletin, Spring, 1971.

The following principles, drawn from the above sources, are intended to serve as guidelines for the California State Department of Education, Office of Program Evaluation and Research, for any publishers of standardized tests interested in this statewide program of evaluation, and for representatives of the schools that will be using tests developed to fulfill stipulations of the Greene Bill (AB 665, Ch. 930, Education Code) and will be discussing this program of evaluation in their communities.

Although the tests to be administered in compliance with the Greene Bill will be designed to assess pupils' competence in using the English language effectively and in spelling, these separate tests should also reflect the developers' awareness of the definition of English as a school subject and of the principle of unity and sequence of English programs as recommended throughout the English Language Framework. The definition of English is implied throughout the Framework, but the following is a direct statement of purposes of such a program:

> "The chief aims of the school program in English are, as the Curriculum Commission has stated, to develop in all children who graduate from the twelfth grade . . . competence in listening, speaking, reading, and writing English and as much understanding and appreciation of the literature of America, England, and the world" (p. 3).

English as a school subject may be defined as

> "the study and use of language, composition, and literature; it includes the consideration of values therein and of the attitudes and processes essential to critical thinking and problem solving; it also includes the teaching of the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and the nourishing of students' imagination and creativeness."[1]

Two sample statements on the unity of English appear in the Framework:

> "Unified and sequential English programs should be planned so as to reflect principles of children's educational growth and to accommodate individual differences in the capacities and rhythm of learning in children (p. 5).

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[1] Alfred H. Grommon, "Once More -- What is English?", English Journal, March, 1967.

"....as far as possible, the components of language, literature, and composition should be continually related in the classroom, for the main concern of the English program must always be the development of the student into an intelligent and sensitive listener, reader, speaker, and writer. To become such a person, he must constantly have available to him, and must be given the opportunity to master as far as he is capable, all of the resources of the discipline of English. 'All classes purporting to be English', insists the position paper of the California Association of Teachers of English,' include attention to utilitarian, artistic, and imaginative uses of language, composition, and literature'" (p.31).

Tests should also be based upon another principle presented in the Framework:

> "Every child...has the right to an English program throughout the school years that affords interrelated study of language, literature, and composition in such a way that he realizes as fully as possible his potentialities as a user of the language and as a reader of and listener to literature." (underlining added) (p.5).

Or as expressed by the late Nolan Noble in the CATE Curriculum Newsletter, Spring, 1971:

> "The teaching of English as a discipline is less a corrective and limiting function than a strengthening and liberating one."[2] (underlining added).

One principle functioning in any act of communicating is that an audience or receiver of some kind is involved and should be taken into account. Hence, any test purported to be an assessment of effective expression must include items related to a communicator's awareness of the nature of his audience as is stated in the Framework:

> "Communication is directed to someone. A sense of audience and of the way our language is shaped by an audience can be developed in the early years, can prepare for honest effective speaking and writing, and can make "composition" relevant outside the classroom.... Through language experience, which includes recognition and definition of audience, the student can learn to know himself in relation to others, and he can discover very early that language has "meaning" only in the context of a situation" (p.64).

The results of this first test to be administered may be analyzed for a number of purposes. One important purpose should be to ascertain which districts need additional resources to help their children acquire adequate skills in written English. A second closely related purpose should be to assist these districts to develop means of appropriate assessment of English language competencies of their pupils both as a supplement to statewide testing and also as a basis for strengthening local programs to help pupils, teachers, and communities.

These, then, are some principles the advisory committee recommends to be taken into account by the Office of Program Evaluation and Research.

Guidelines

The Committee also recommends the following guidelines representing specific application of the preceding principles as further aids for whoever will be responsible for developing a valid test of competencies in the uses of English:

1. Test items should reflect an awareness that a child's initial development of language competence is in the dialect or language acquired within his linguistic environment. Although it may not be possible to construct culture free tests, considerable effort should be devoted to developing tests that are culturally fair. Test items should avoid aspects of the standard dialect which interfere with another dialect of English.

2. Questions requiring pupils to discriminate among choices of usage and diction should be based upon the criteria of what is appropriate to a speaker, his audience, and the situation in which the usage is to be uttered rather than upon any traditional concept of so-called "correctness" in the use of the English language.

3. Accordingly, questions related to usage should specify the speaker and the situation in which these items of usage are to be considered, thereby indicating the relationship between the speaker, his audience, and the context in which he is speaking.

4. Test items related to questions of English usage should also reflect the principle that informal English is appropriate in many contexts.

5. Questions related to appropriateness of usage and diction should be intended further to encourage pupils and teachers to accept the natural and simple use of the English language rather than the pedantic and the awkward.

6. Settings in which the language items are being used and the items themselves should be appropriate to the maturity levels and interests of students being tested. For example, items testing pupils' vocabulary and command of syntax should be appropriate to the grade level of the students being tested.

7. Many items should be written at a level of difficulty in reading below that at which students are being tested.

8. Items should represent the range of practical and academic applications of the use of the English language that students face.

9. Items should not include specific grammatical terminology unless the meaning of such terms is easily discernible in the context of the item or is directly defined.

10. The basic recommendation on the format of any test is that subtests should be designated as single samples with all test items derived from the example. All items within a subtest should be related to a sample situation or setting, thereby maintaining the unified or holistic nature of the language arts. Meaning is frequently derived more from context than from single words, phrases, and sentences; to test

for any concept of effective written expression out of context can seem confusing and unreal. The sample itself may be a letter, paragraph, editorial, news story, or even dictionary entry so long as it provides a range of possible questions on effective expression and is in itself free of gross errors.

11. Grouping and Format of Items:

In each subtest similar test items should be arranged together so that the student taking the test can focus on sentence patterns, sentence manipulation, punctuation, diction, and all other test elements one at a time. The physical layout of the single sample ideally would have the sample presented once as an uninterrupted piece; for examination purposes the sample could appear as the left-hand column and the test items as the right-hand column on the same page. Items may be of the true-false or multiple-choice varieties, with preference for the latter.

Appendix C

A STATEMENT OF CONCERNS FROM THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The English Language Assessment Advisory Committee commends the Legislature and the State Department of Education for recognizing the inadequacies of previous tests, and for involving the profession (teachers of English) in the development of new state tests for assessing the effectiveness of written expression and spelling. The Committee also approves the change from gross testing patterns to matrix sampling.

The Committee has some reservations, however, about testing and about the process by which the test on effectiveness of written expression is being developed. The complex problem of evaluation is not solved in toto by a test. The public and many legislators have faith that we possess instruments for measuring all learning that the schools have promoted. Most professional test makers concede, however, that we do not have such instruments, that there is always something left out in the measurement process.

A second reservation, then, results from the influence that evaluative instruments exert upon curriculum. Since AB 665 stipulates written expression for testing, curriculum of schools might evolve in response to this test at the expense of reducing or eliminating other important curricular areas. Further, in the area of written expression, only those elements of instruction and learning which are amenable to objective testing will find their way into test items. If, as seems inevitable, the curriculum is influenced by the test items, the schools will be in danger of developing unbalanced if not trivial programs for the sake of improved test scores.

This problem is compounded in a state which has the most culturally diversified student population in the nation. Any test designed to measure effectiveness of written expression in English should be administered to speakers of English only. Since cultural bias is bound to appear in any test of language use, the test would necessarily reflect poorly on bilingual students in a "developing state" of language learning. The inappropriateness of emphasizing rhetorical devices and diction to a group of students struggling with basic issues, such as word order in English, is readily apparent. Forcing all students to take the same kind of tests in effectiveness of written expression in English could force teachers into teaching material inappropriate for these students.

For practical compliance with stipulations in the new testing bill, a single test of students' abilities in English written expression must be administered on a statewide basis. Yet the California State Department of Education, the Legislature, and communities throughout the state must recognize that no single objective test or its alternative forms can adequately assess the variety of language competencies represented by the public school population in a state as diverse as California. A test that may be appropriate for assessing the abilities of middle-class white pupils to write English may not be suitable at all as a means of identifying language abilities of pupils who are learning English as a second language.

Furthermore, a first choice for an evaluative instrument should be an actual writing sample. Since a compromise instrument will be used, a sampling technique should also be used to obtain writing samples from a valid cross-section of the school population. The new test should measure written expression as well as editorial skill. This would occur if the results of the objective tests correlate with the results of the writing sample, and if not, the use of objective tests would seem to be unacceptable.

The Committee realizes that such proposals take time to implement. Members of the Committee are concerned about the adequacy of funding and time for the completion of this task and for the total process of choosing test items, field testing, reviewing, and updating the test every two years. As a result of this concern, while the Committee has reached consensus on the objectives for the test, the Committee must reserve endorsement of the actual test items, since the bulk of the test items will be taken from publishers' banks of test items already nationally normed. Since the format for many of the test items suggested by the Committee is new, it is the Committee's expectation that the kind of test items chosen will not reflect the best thinking of the Committee members on the best possible test items, and we foresee a long period of testing and review provided this test proves adequate when evaluated vis-a-vis the students' actual writing.

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